

# Habitat Happenings



News and Events from **Runge Conservation Nature Center** • March/April 2014

Serving nature and you

## My First Mushroom

*Share your enthusiasm for fungi.*

I knelt down by the base of the tree. I felt very small in comparison to the towering oaks all around me. However, I was staring at something even smaller than myself. It was a tiny, little, red thing with white spots. Standing only four inches tall, it was my first mushroom.

Looking back, it probably wasn't a bad mushroom for a ten year old to find. Sure, the *Amanita muscaria* is toxic, but it was bright and flashy enough to grab my attention and get me interested. As soon as I got home I researched my discovery and began to look for other mushrooms in Missouri. I was hooked. Since then I have taken every opportunity available to hunt for and identify mushrooms.

Over the last six years, I have met many people who share my enthusiasm for fungi. Everyone from toddlers to grandparents can have fun mushroom hunting. In fact, it can be a great family activity. Even small children can have fun exploring the woods with their parents looking under May apples for morels.

Hunting for mushrooms is also a great excuse just to exercise and get outside. After all, mushrooms aren't the only discoveries you can make while walking through the woods. Many people are amazed at the plant and animal life they see while searching for these fabulous fungi.

One very important thing to remember when hunting for edible mushrooms

is to always be 100% sure of identification. If you're not sure, don't pick it. Of course, the most important thing is to have FUN!

So, what are you waiting for? Grab a basket, a field guide and some friends or family and get going. What will be your first mushroom?

—Michaela Kirk,  
Youth Volunteer Naturalist



# Volunteer News

At our annual Volunteer Holiday Gathering in December 2013, the following Runge Volunteer Naturalists were recognized for their contributions this year.



Jim Smith received the "Wood Award" for the volunteer who is steadfast, solid and dependable.



Kay Kasiske received the "Tin Award" for the volunteer with the most charitable heart.



Nanci Beck received the "Crystal Award" for the volunteer who brings brightness, clarity, and energy to Runge.



Anne Hutton received the "China Award" for the Volunteer of the Year.



Michaela Kirk received the "Silver Award" for the Youth Volunteer.

## Volunteer Milestones

Congratulations to the following volunteers for the hours of service donated to the Runge Nature Center.

200 hours – Kent Moreland

1250 hours – Bruce Berger and Anne Hutton

1000 hours – Kent Hillman

2000 hours – Sonya Hollingsworth

# Exhibitors

## Wildflowers

by Dan Rackley and Marcia Owens

Dan Rackley and Marcia Owens are friends and native Missourians who love to travel the state's highways and back roads, enjoying nature and taking photographs. With intrigue, dedication, and curiosity this duo has acquired thousands of wildflower photos, while braving the elements of chiggers, mosquitoes, and ticks.

"We were astonished to discover many wildflowers that we never knew existed. Some that were so small (like the scarlet pimpernel) that we almost missed them. There are so many unique and beautiful wildflowers in Missouri—we feel we have only begun to represent them. We hope you enjoy our photographs and that they encourage you to make your own discoveries."



Dan Rackley



Marcia Owens

## National Volunteer Appreciation Week

April 6 – 12

For 40 years, we have lifted up volunteers across the country and from every spectrum of our society during National Volunteer Appreciation Week. For 20 years, the volunteer naturalists at Runge have helped visitors experience and explore Missouri's great outdoors and share conservation messages. Volunteers range in age from 14 through 80 years young and come from all walks of life. They understand the importance and the benefits of the outdoors and are passionate about sharing it with you, our visitors. Help us celebrate our volunteers and thank them the next time you see them.

The Runge Conservation Nature Center is located on 97 acres in the heart of central Missouri. Come discover and enjoy the wonders of Missouri's habitats and its array of fish, forests, and wildlife. Runge CNC is located one-third mile north of Hwy 50 on Hwy 179 (330 Commerce Drive).

**HOURS:** Tuesday–Saturday: 8 AM–5 PM  
Thursday: 8 AM–8 PM Closed Sunday, Monday

**TRAIL HOURS:** Open 6 AM–9 PM

<http://mdc.mo.gov/regions/central/runge-nature-center>

# For the Little Ones...

Connect with nature through exciting and age-appropriate opportunities.



Robin Grumm showing children a snake up-close and personal. These programs encourage parent and child participation in experiencing the outdoors.



discover nature programs...

- Help Missourians discover and explore nature
- Provide expert instruction and hands-on activities
- Are available statewide

## Little Acorns Programs

### Babes In The Woods

Children ages 0 through 2 years of age are welcome to attend a Babes program with their caregiver. This program is limited to 15 children, plus caregiver.

### Little Acorns

Children 3 through 6 years of age are welcome to attend a Little Acorns program with their caregiver. This program is limited to 20 children, plus caregiver.

### Little Acorns PLUS

If you have a child that fits into our Babes program **AND** one that fits into our Little Acorns program this is for you. This program is limited to 20 children, plus caregiver. Please provide the ages of your children when making your reservation.

### March

Registration begins March 1st  
573-526-5544

### Mother Opossum and Her Babies

A strong sniffer with a pocket and thumbs - these are just a few of the curious characteristics of North America's only marsupial. Join us this month in learning about this fascinating creature.

### Babes In The Woods

March 11 • Tuesday • 10 AM  
March 19 • Wednesday • 10 AM

### Little Acorns

March 5 • Wednesday • 10 AM  
March 13 • Thursday • 6 PM

### Little Acorns PLUS

March 8 • Saturday • 10 AM  
March 26 • Wednesday • 10 AM

### April

Registration begins April 1st  
573-526-5544

### SNUGS—Snails and Slugs

A silvery trail is left by a slow moving snail. A slippery slug is slimier than a bug. Slip into the small world of these fascinating creatures this month.

### Babes In The Woods

April 11 • Friday • 10 AM  
April 22 • Tuesday • 10 AM

### Little Acorns

April 12 • Saturday • 10 AM  
April 17 • Thursday • 10 AM

### Little Acorns PLUS

April 16 • Wednesday • 10 AM  
April 24 • Thursday • 6 PM

# Week of the Young Child

**April 6 - 12.** Check out the April **Calendar of Events** for additional programs.



# Runge Calendar of Events - March

Get outdoors and experience what nature has provided for you.



## March Events

*Registration begins March 1st.*

Programs are free. Call 573-526-5544 to sign up for a program requiring registration. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on the waiting list.

### Backpacking 101

March 8 • Saturday • 10 AM– Noon

*Registration required (8 years and older)*

Backpacking is one of the best ways to explore and enjoy the outdoors. This program will help you prepare for your backpacking adventure. If you have wanted to take a backpacking trip, this will be the perfect program for you to learn the basics.

### Puppet Show: A Fungus Among Us Tree Dwellers

March 8 • Saturday • 1–2 PM

*No registration required (all ages)*

Join Runge puppeteers for a close look at some things which call trees their homes. Maybe you can discover why Fungus is unhappy, and see if Bluebird or her friends can help her feel better.



### River Bluffs Audubon Society Presents: Karst Natural Areas

March 13 • Thursday • 6:30–7:30 PM

*No registration required (adults)*

The Missouri Natural Areas System conserves a number of important karst features throughout our state: caves, springs, sinkholes, and groundwater seepage wetlands. This talk by Michael Leahy, Missouri Department of Conservation, will highlight these Natural Areas and provide more information on them. He will also explore great places to visit that will help you understand and appreciate the karst natural areas of Missouri.

### Creature Feature

March 19 • Wednesday • 10 AM–2 PM

March 26 • Wednesday • 10 AM–2 PM

*No registration required (all)*

Spend some time on your spring break getting to know one of the animals at Runge up-close and personal. Meet the featured Creature of the Day.

### Adventure Birding - March Mystery

March 15 • Saturday • 8–11 AM

*Registration required (ages 11 and older)*

March is a transition month, especially in Missouri. The kinds of birds we find at Runge this month is always a mystery. We might have winter birds, spring birds, birds on the move and returning summer residents. Be a part of this adventure to find out. Dress for the weather, bring your binoculars or borrow a pair of ours.

### Story Tree

March 15 • Saturday • 10–11 AM

*No registration required (all ages)*

This is an informal story time that takes place in our Wildlife Viewing Area. Children and their caregivers have an opportunity to pick out nature books to be read aloud to them by our volunteer naturalist.

### Mushroom Madness

March 15 • Saturday • 10:30–Noon

*Registration required (8 years and older)*

How do you find mushrooms? By looking up. Stan Hudson, from the Missouri Mycological Society (MOMS) will lead this workshop. He will focus on how to find and identify some common edible mushrooms in Missouri by understanding their relationship to trees. There will be an outdoor component, so come dressed for the weather.



### Nature's Needlers

March 20 • Thursday •

10:30 AM–Noon • 6–7:30 PM

*Registration required (ages 18 and older)*

The third program in the Missouri Prairie series is all about fire. Join us as we explore the nature of fire and its impact on the prairie ecosystem. Enjoy learning and sharing information with beginning quilters and experienced fiber artists.

### Native Plant Sale

March 22 • Saturday • 10 AM–2 PM

*No registration required (adults)*

Refer to back page for details.

### Aquarium Feeding

March 28 • Friday • 11:30 AM

*No registration required (all ages)*

The fish and turtles are hungry! Join us by the aquariums and watch them eat.

### Teen Club: Fly Fishing Expedition

March 25 • Tuesday • 8 AM–5 PM

*Registration required (ages 12–18)*

The Capitol City Fly Fishermen will be our teachers on this fishing expedition. We will travel to Bennett Spring State Park and spend the day learning a new way to fish or practicing skills you already know. If you have flies you have tied, bring them and try them out. If not, some will be provided. We will also provide fly rods, but you are welcome to bring your own. Please pack a lunch, bring water, and dress for the weather – you never know! Transportation will be provided. A permission form needs to be completed prior to leaving. Pick one up at the nature center. Space is limited.

### Overnight Backpacking Trip

March 29 • Saturday • 1 PM through

March 30 • Sunday • Noon

*Registration required (12 years and older)*

Be prepared and enjoy! That's the theme of this adventure. It is the perfect trip for the novice or for those who have been away from the experience for too long. We will hike into Three Creeks Conservation Area (approximately 2 miles), set up camp and hike out the following day. We will be exploring nature's splendor through discovery activities and sharing. A pre-trip meeting on March 20 at 6PM will be required to prepare for this adventure.

### Firearms Safety for Youth Hunters

March 29 • Saturday • 9:30–11:30 AM

*Registration required (ages 6–10 years accompanied by an adult)*

Although this is not a hunter education course, this program can help make sure your youth are safe during the hunting season. We'll cover the commandments of firearms and safety, safe methods for carrying a firearm, and tree stand safety.

### Intro to Turkey Hunting

March 29 • Saturday • 1–4:30 PM

*Registration required (all ages)*

Get ready for spring turkey season. Learn about wild turkey biology, clothing, scouting, and methods of hunting.

# Runge Calendar of Events - April

Get outdoors and experience what nature is sharing with you.

## April Events

*Registration begins April 1st*

Programs are free. Call 573-526-5544 to sign up for a program requiring registration. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on the waiting list.

### River Bluffs Audubon Society Presents: Falconry In Missouri

April 10 • Thursday • 5:30–6:30 PM

*No registration required (all ages)*

Learn about the exciting and ancient sport of Falconry from Meagan Duffee, a Missouri practitioner of the sport and her birds. She will speak about the history of falconry, and the birds used in the sport. The importance of raptor conservation will be discussed.

### Homeschool: Predators!

April 11 • Friday • 1–2:30 PM

*Registration required (8 years and older)*

Predators, large and small, are lurking all around Missouri and they play an important role in keeping our natural world balanced. Take a walk to search for some predators and even meet a few up close.

### Puppet Show: A Fungus Among Us Tree Dwellers

April 12 • Saturday • 1–2 PM

*No registration required (all ages)*

Join Runge puppeteers for a close look at some things which call trees their homes. Maybe you can discover why Fungus is unhappy, and see if Bluebird or her friends can help her feel better.



### Designs with Nature in Mind- Fingerprint Art

April 12 • Saturday • 10 AM–Noon AND 2–4 PM

*Registration required (18 years and older)*

Discover the designs of nature with your hands. Using thumb/finger prints learn to make frogs, fish, birds, and other animals to enhance your scrapbooking. Take home two 12" x 12" scrapbook pages ready for your favorite nature photos. Caution – this will be messy!

### Nature's Needlers

April 17 • Thursday •

10:30 AM–Noon • 6–7:30 PM

*Registration required (ages 18 and older)*

Boom, boom, boom goes the Prairie Chicken. Can you hear it? Join us for the fourth program in the Missouri Prairie series. Pick up your quilt pattern and field notes at this month's program.

### Adventure Birding - Field Trip

April 19 • Saturday • 8 AM–Noon

*Registration required (ages 11 and older)*

Join us for our first off-site birding expedition! We will explore a 25-acre spot in Columbia—the 3M Urban Ecology Restoration Project on the MKT trail. Dress for the weather, bring your binoculars or borrow a pair of ours. We will carpool from Runge. Children under 18 years of age without an adult accompanying them will need to have the permission form completed and signed by a parent/guardian.

### What's Going On? Marvelous Mushrooms!

April 19 • Saturday • 10 AM–2 PM

*No registration required (all ages)*

Learn the "what" and "where" of mushroom hunting and identification through discovery tables and activities. Search for mushrooms on a naturalist-led walk at 11AM and 1PM. Hopefully we will enjoy samples of some prepared mushroom delicacies!



### Story Tree - On the Trail!

April 19 • Saturday • 1–2 PM

*No registration required (all ages)*

Walk the Naturescape Trail and encounter a volunteer naturalist eager to share a nature story or two with you. You will be delighted with the stories and activities you encounter. In case of inclement weather, the Story Tree will be inside.

### What's Going On? Missouri Turtles

April 26 • Saturday • 10 AM–2 PM

*No registration required (all ages)*

Come out of your shell and visit Runge's resident live turtles, turtle activities, and take a naturalist-led walk to find out where turtles hide out! Guided walk leaves at 1PM.

The *Week of the Young Child* is a yearly celebration of young children and their caregivers. This year the specific week-long celebration is April 6 – 12.

At Runge, we celebrate young children all year long and encourage parents and caretakers to get outside and Discover Nature! Please visit us often, walk the trails, explore our exhibits, and play. See you at the nature center!

### What's Going On? Week of the Young Child

April 12 • Saturday • 10 AM–2 PM

*No registration required (all ages)*

The celebration of the **Week of the Young Child** comes to a conclusion today. Why not bring your favorite young child to Runge. Celebrate by getting outdoors; take a walk, go on an explore or check out our exhibits. Activities will be geared toward the young child but suitable for all ages.

### Runge goes to Parents As Teachers Carnival

April 12 • Saturday • 9:30–11 AM

*No registration required (all ages)*

Join us at Riverside Park, 210 North Grant Street, Jefferson City, as we celebrate young children with activities along side other community venues.

### Discover Nature Women: Dabblers and Divers

April 29 • Tuesday • 9 AM–4 PM

*Registration required (18 years and older)*

Go on a birding adventure to Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area to observe and identify waterfowl. We will meet at Runge for a short presentation and then carpool to the area. Bring your lunch or money to eat at Lucy's Cafe and your favorite binoculars. We will provide spotting scopes and a few binoculars. Please dress for the weather.

# vitamin **N** for nature

## Vitamin 'N' for Nature;

Connecting with the natural side of things, and in the process reaping many health benefits.

Try these connections:

**STAND** barefoot on grass or dirt. Be very quiet and feel the sensations of your feet against the Earth.

**LOOK** around you for the color green. How many different shades of green can you find?

[www.naturecircles.org](http://www.naturecircles.org)

## What's Going On?

Programs and activities at Runge Nature Center

### Every Saturday At Runge

10 AM–2 PM

*No registration required (all ages)*

The Runge Nature Center offers exploratory tables, activities, and/or crafts every Saturday throughout the year. Stop in to see what adventure awaits you during our "What's Going On?" at the nature center.

## Calling All Hikers

Exploring the great outdoors

Runge has three volunteer-led programs designed to provide opportunities for people of all ages to hike Missouri trails and learn about the plants, animals, and natural communities. Each month we'll meet at the nature center, carpool to one of Missouri's choice hiking spots and hike one or two of the best trails. Bring water, wear comfortable hiking shoes, and come dressed for the weather.



### Half-Day Discovery Hikes

March 8 • Saturday • 8 AM–Noon Reservations begin March 1st.

*Registration required (ages 8 and older)*

Location: Boone County Pinnacles Youth Park. Boone county.

Trail Length: 2 miles Terrain: Rocky and steep.

Focus: Early Spring Wildflowers

April 12 • Saturday • 8 AM–Noon Reservations begin April 1st.

*Registration required (ages 8 and older)*

Location: Mark Twain National Forest. Pine Ridge Campground, near Ashland.

Trail Length: 2 miles Terrain: Slight inclines and/or few obstructions.

Focus: Wild Greens and Edible Mushrooms

### Midweek Trekkers

March 19 • Wednesday • 8 AM–5 PM

Reservations begin March 1st.

*Registration required (adults)*

Location: Scrivner Conservation Area. Near Russellville in Cole county

Trail Length: 8.5 miles Terrain: Moderate inclines and/or occasional rocks/roots.

Notes: Bring lunch.

April 16 • Wednesday • 8 AM–5 PM

Reservations begin April 1st.

*Registration required (adults)*

Location: Van Meter State Park. North of Marshall in Saline county.

Trail Length: 4 miles Terrain: Moderate inclines and/or occasional rocks/roots.

Notes: Bring lunch.

### The Hiking Club

March 22 • Saturday • 8 AM–5 PM Reservations begin March 1st.

*Registration required (adults)*

Location: Rudolph Bennitt Conservation Area. At the junction of Boone, Howard, and Randolph counties.

Trail Length: 7 miles Terrain: Moderate inclines and/or occasional rocks/roots.

Notes: Bring lunch.

April 26 • Saturday • 8 AM–5 PM Reservations begin April 1st.

*Registration required (adults)*

Location: Painted Rock and Clifty Creek Conservation Areas. Painted Rock CA is near Westphalia in Osage county and Clifty Creek CA is near Dixon in Maries county.

Trail Length: 6 miles Terrain: Moderate inclines and/or occasional rocks/roots.

Notes: Bring lunch.





# Conservation Kids' Club

A club created for kids 6–12 years who love to explore nature and learn about wildlife.



Conservation Kids' club is a club created for kids 6–12 years who love to explore nature. When you make your reservation 573-526-5544, please provide the name of each member, their age, and the number of siblings attending the Little Acorns program to help us better prepare. Thank you.

## Ozark Memories Storytelling Molly Postlewait- Storyteller/Naturalist

March 18 • Tuesday • 6:30–8 PM *Registration required (March 1 through March 14)*

Go on an Ozark adventure through your imagination and Molly's stories. Her storytelling will connect you to Missouri's plants, animals, Gasconade River explorations, and shhhh....BURIED TREASURE. All who come are sworn to secrecy.

## Spring Symphony

April 15 • Tuesday • 6:30–8 PM *Registration required (April 1 through April 11)*

The frog calls return with the rains. Why do they call? Why is rain important? Learn to identify frog calls, hike to a Runge pond for a LIVE performance, and make a rain stick to help bring the rains. Please dress for the weather.

**Parents/Guardians!** While big brother/sister attends Conservation Kids' Club, your preschooler (3 through 6 years of age) can be involved in a program at the same time. A preschool program will be available for siblings of Conservation Kids' Club members on Tuesday, March 18 and April 15. **Please limit your Little Acorn reservations to one program each month.**

## MDC Free Regional Workshops

### Pond Management Workshop

Do you have questions about building a new pond or an existing pond on your property? If so, this workshop is for you. The workshop will cover a wide variety of topics including, pond site selection, pond construction, pond stocking, fisheries management, aquatic vegetation management, pond watershed management, and nuisance wildlife. Professionals from MDC, NRCS, and SWCD will give presentations and will be available to answer questions.

#### **March 4 • Tuesday • 6:30–9 PM**

Location: MDC Central Regional Office, 3500 East Gans Road, Columbia  
Registration: Central Regional Office at 573-815-7900 by March 3rd.

#### **March 6 • Thursday • 6:30–9 PM**

Location: Montgomery City Public Library  
Registration: USDA Service Center at 573-564-3715 ext. 3 by March 4th.

#### **March 13 • Thursday • 6:30–8:30 PM**

Location: Maries R1 Public High School community classroom, Vienna  
Registration: Missouri Department of Conservation, Scott Williams at 573-796-0286 ext. 4284 by March 11th.



**March 22**

**10 AM–2 PM**

# **Grow Native! Plant Sale**

**Welcome to our annual native plant sale! It's time to purchase and plant beautiful and hardy flowers, shrubs, and trees for your home or business.**

**The sale is in partnership with the Grow Native! program of the Missouri Prairie Foundation. Vendors are available to sell and provide you with answers to your native planting questions.**

**Vendors:**

MO Wildflowers Nursery—Jefferson City

Forrest Keeling Nursery—Elsberry

DJM Ecological Services—Wentzville

Prairie Hill Farm—Auxvasse

Gaylena's Garden—Fulton

Ozark Berry Farm - Leasburg

**Pick up your FREE native plant, butterfly, and rain gardening brochures.**